1: Nimuendajú E-5 (1929-1938) 1946 SO8 Timbira SO8

the house of the challenging team's vṵ'tẹ́'. The course of a relay race is from this house along her semicircle, thence onward. Two competitors theoretically run from the house of the challenger's vṵ'tẹ́' across the plaza to the opponents' vṵ'tẹ́' house. In the present village the ground slopes southward in some measure, so these races always proceed from the house of the vṵ'tẹ́' of the eastern age-class moiety (on the north side of the village) to the vṵ'tẹ́' house of the complementary pair.

Leaders.—The two official leaders, mamkyẽ'ti, of a class represent, respectively, the eastern and western plaza groups. Before the opening of the first initiation phase they are carefully selected by the councilors from among the prospective initiates. To begin the solemnities these two boys are led out of their mothers' houses and made to face each other in the plaza. Their badge is a fan of erect arara tail feathers worn at the back of the head. In the earlier phase, where the initiates of the eastern and the western plaza groups appear separately, each leader heads his group, all marching in Indian file. In the latter phase, where this dichotomy no longer holds, and after the close of initiation, the leader of the eastern moiety takes precedence.

These mamkyẽ'ti form part of a ceremonial aristocracy (p. 97). It is they who actually govern the age classes, being possibly the only functionaries who literally have orders among the Canella, a task for which they are trained from the beginning. Only they have the right to summon their class fellows, who are obliged to obey the call and may not assemble without their leaders. Anyone who has dealings with a class, including the chiefs, must turn to its mamkyẽ'ti. These leaders are subject only to the council and—during the initiation period—also to the mekapónkate (instructor, commandant), who belongs to an older class, and to his deputy, the mekapónkatekahą'k, the senior member of the class to be initiated.

In case of a leader's death no substitute is chosen. If both mamkyẽ'ti should die prematurely, the instructor's deputy assumes the leadership, but this is always regarded as a calamity for the class. Theoretically, the leaders are equals, but in practice the abler of the two soon gains ascendancy without, however, completely eclipsing his colleague. In contrast to the chiefs, the mamkyẽ'ti exercise no authority whatever beyond their age class.

In former times the mamkyẽ'ti led their class in war and in the chase, though always aided by one or several older men. Since warfare belongs completely to the past and communal hunting has dwindled in importance the present significance of these officers is slight—apart from ceremonial. The present situation for the several classes is as follows:

(a) The youngest class, kra'tą̃'kama, is actually governed by its mekapónkate.

(b) The next older class, põhjtíkama, has two mamkyẽ'ti, but they are completely overshadowed by the personality of Kapẽrtṵ'k, the second commandant and actual leader.

(c) The kapranpotíkama have a very able and energetic leader named Yõ'ro; his colleague is no longer living. During the last pepyé ceremony of this class (1923) Čątú was their instructor; he remained with them after the close of the initiation and from sheer devotion to his pupils continues as their nonofficial commandant. Yõ'ro still continues to regard him as a superior.

(d) The oldest active class, the rópkama, have only one mamkyẽ'ti, Koipõ'ro, the other having died.

The term mamkyẽ'ti, evidently connected with kyẽ, exogamous moiety, suggests that the leaders originally represented the exogamous halves rather than the plaza

1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

the two exogamous moieties; they certainly do not represent them nowadays and never did in the Fish companies of the tepyarkwá festival. The two girls are chosen from a part of the village circumference corresponding to the situation of the society in the plaza; and the Fish Otters have a single girl associate.

The head of a society nominates the girls, who are appointed by the council. The councilors notify the families, which, however, have the right to decline. More particularly, the girl's maternal uncle may refuse his permission, while the prospective (at present sometimes the actual) husband has no say in the matter.

The appointee is always a girl on whom the girdle has not yet been bestowed (p. 119). Such a girdle is not presented to her until the close of her term of office as a mekuičwę'i; formerly marriage occurred subsequently to this ceremony. In general the Falcons, Jaguars, and Mummers, as well as the several Fish companies, still aspire to having virgins for their associates. Not so the Agoutis, Ducks, and hõčwá, who are content with selecting any young women. The Clowns choose two ex-vų'tę', who accordingly are already married.

The girls constantly accompany the membership of their society. Their duties are few, embracing such work as is deemed inappropriate for men, viz., cooking, especially in the earth oven, fetching water, and the like. In addition they comb and paint the men, for which purposes they carry a rod-comb and a little bowl with urucú hanging down their backs from a cord (pl. 20, *a*). As a member of the Agouti society in 1935 I saw a girl dismissed because she had neglected even these few tasks and would altogether absent herself from the organization, which accordingly asked for the appointment of a successor.

Amours *may* develop between the girls and the members, especially during their rovings for days at a time over the steppe. In consequence engagements are broken and couples already living together separate. Mainly to avoid this risk families often refuse to let their girls assume office, so that it tends more and more to fall into the hands of wantons (p. 130). However, it is by no means the essential purpose of the institution to provide mistresses for the membership: in former times the girls departed from their association as virgins, and in general the members still hold them in esteem.

The festive societies are in part leagued together, in part pitted against one another. The Jaguars and the Agoutis who jointly appear at the closing ceremony of the vų'tę' season are opponents; and when they figure at the Mummers' festival the Mummers side with the Agoutis. In the pepkahą'k festival the Falcons, allied with the pepkahą'k, are opposed to the Ducks, and the teams of log racers during the festival are recruited from these two societies. Similarly, the Clowns side with the pepkahą'k and the Falcons.

The Clowns differ from the other societies in the mode of entrance, which hinges on a person's inborn capacity for buffoonery so that any one confident in his gifts may join. But since this talent is not especially developed among the Timbira, the number of members is small—about a dozen—and at times diminishes to a point where the society feels compelled to woo recruits, especially if the Clowns seem too few for their duties at tepyarkwá. Then they invite a suitable man from each of the six plaza groups to join their number. At the pepkahą'k festival the Clowns usually succeed in persuading this or that King Vulture who finds the social obligations of that order too onerous to join them in the destruction of a wasp nest the Ducks have put up in front of the seclusion hut of the pepkahą'k. This act automatically expels the member from the King Vultures.

The Clowns appear as an organized body only at the pepkahą'k and the tep